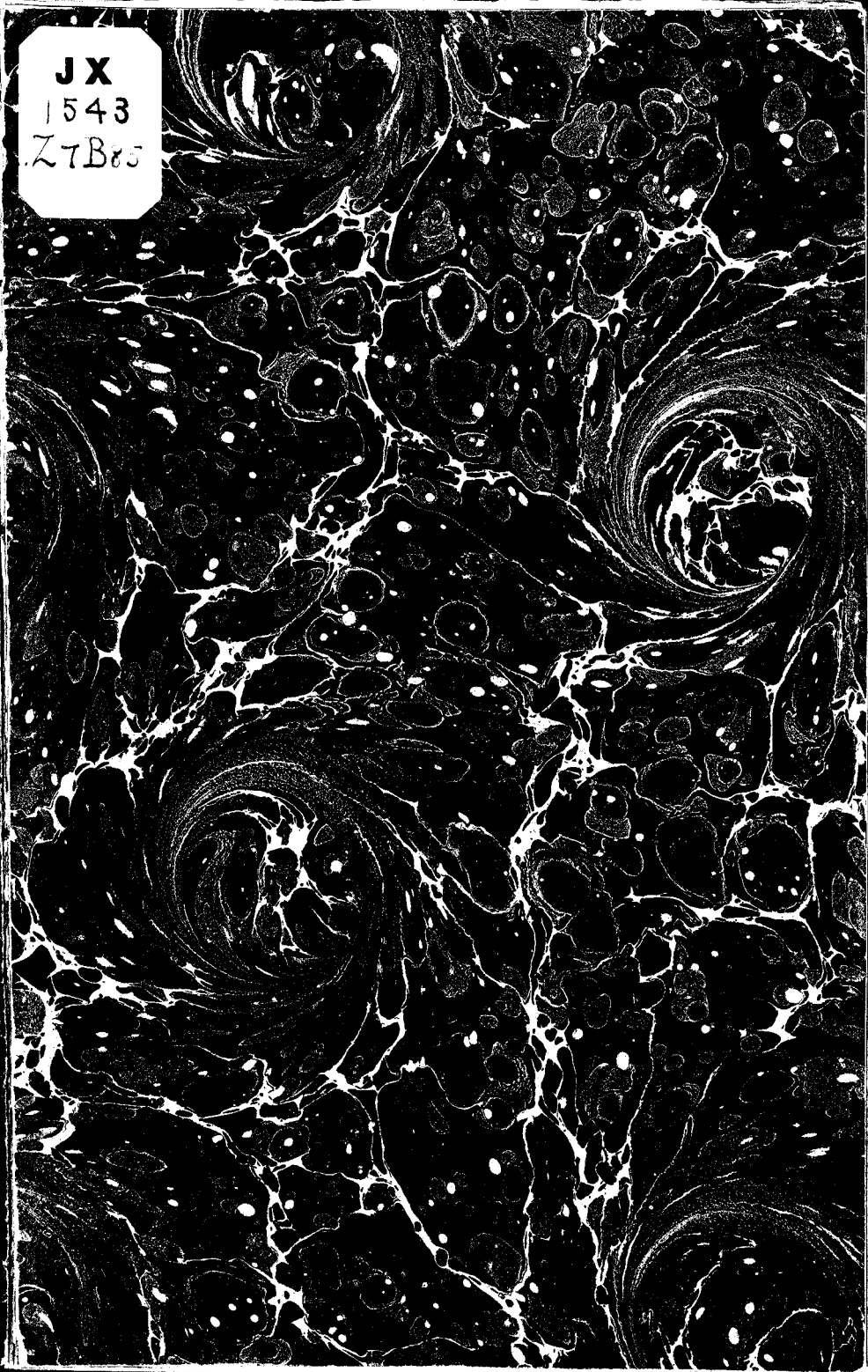


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ENGLAND AND BRAZIL.

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ENGLAND AND BRAZIL IN 1863.

THE questions which arose between this country and Brazil, and which have led to a present interruption of diplomatic relations, have occupied a large share of public attention, have been variously discussed in both Houses of Parliament, in the newspaper press, and in private circles; the interest thus excited seems to be due rather to our important commercial transactions with Brazil, to the gratification with which the increasing prosperity of that country is viewed, and to its weakness as compared with England (which caused a natural repugnance among Englishmen lest undue pressure or severity should be applied to the South American Empire), than to the intrinsic importance of the questions themselves. These questions were two: alleged ill-treatment of officers of Her Majesty's frigate "Forte," and circumstances arising from the wreck of the barque "Prince of Wales;" in offering observations, as brief as is consistent with clearness, on these matters, we have an apology to offer to those of the public who may consider that the points disputed have been sufficiently ventilated; it has appeared to us that all parties who, not only in this country but in Brazil, have discussed the questions, were influenced by foregone conclusions which induced them to put forth *ex parte* statements, or possibly to distort the facts for the purpose of argument; and we do not find that any full or impartial statement has yet been put before the public, that contained in the first papers presented to Parliament being perhaps the

most explanatory, but showing a deficiency usual to such documents in not putting forward a continuous narrative—a fault exaggerated in the papers referred to from the admixture of two cases different in principle and character; in defence of our publication, we should also state that we are possessed of sources of information not opened to the English public, though intending almost wholly to limit ourselves to the papers presented to Parliament; and that our object is, by encouraging a true appreciation of the facts, to remove those doubts and jealousies which have interfered with the amicable relations which it is desirable should exist between England and Brazil.

The case regarding insults said to have been received by officers of Her Majesty's ship "Forte" having been referred to arbitration, and the arbitration having been decided, it may be considered as settled, and we will devote thereto only a few words.

It appears that on the 17th June, 1862, Lieutenant Pringle, the Rev. G. Clemenger, and Mr. Hornby, officers of Her Majesty's ship "Forte," had been dining at Mr. Bennett's boarding-house at Tijuca, outside Rio de Janeiro, and on returning on foot, and dressed in plain clothes, in the evening, to meet the omnibus for Rio de Janeiro, an altercation arose with a Brazilian sentry at the guard-house, the result of which was that these officers were arrested, treated harshly, and, on the 19th June, released without trial. With regard to the origin of this quarrel, and the subsequent treatment, a conflict of evidence usual in such cases occurs, the Englishmen declaring that they were, without provocation, attacked by the sentry and his companions, and the Brazilians maintaining that the sentry had been in the first instance insulted, and that the prisoners were treated in the ordinary manner without more severity than was necessary. In forming an opinion on these divergences of opinion, some allowance appears due to a little excitement on each side, and to a reciprocal ignorance of manners and language. Finally, it was referred to the arbitration of the King of the Belgians to decide whether, *in the*

mode of applying the Brazilian laws to the officers of Her Majesty's ship "*Forte*," there had been any *offence to the British Navy*, and His Majesty decided that no such offence had been offered or intended. It is difficult to understand how, under the reference made, a different decision could have been anticipated; independently of a doubt which may naturally suggest itself, as to whether British naval officers on foreign soil, when in plain clothes, without any distinctive mark of their rank, and out of the range of official duties, are entitled to treatment more lenient than that which should be accorded to any other British subjects; there does not appear in the evidence submitted any positive proof that in these proceedings any insult was intended to the British flag; the Brazilians who are the accused should be allowed the benefit of any doubt which exists; and it is remarkable, that Earl Russell's despatch of the 8th October, 1862, upon which the further demands were founded, though detailing the excessive severity with which the officers of the "*Forte*" were treated, does not attribute such treatment to any desire to affront the British Navy: whilst, therefore, expressing no surprise that the King of the Belgians should have determined this question with the impartiality for which he is distinguished, we are unwilling to join in the senseless cry, directed for party purposes, against the British Government, for having seriously taken up the case; for had they omitted to show their strong disapproval of the conduct pursued by the Brazilian officials towards the officers of the "*Forte*," it is but too probable their forbearance would have been the signal for fresh violences; and in the treatment of those gentlemen, by a large number of brutalized soldiers, and in face of a foreign public, there are certainly to be found circumstances calling at least for positive notice and censure.

We now proceed to consider the occurrences which arose out of the wreck of the barque "*Prince of Wales*," on the coast of Brazil, examining first the declarations on both sides as evidenced in the papers presented to the British Parliament, and secondly the degree of credibility which should

be attached to the contrary statements made, and we hope by this means to arrive at a just appreciation of the facts.

The English statements are in effect:

1. That the "Prince of Wales" having been wrecked, the cargo was shamelessly plundered.

2. That the local authorities took no steps to check that plunder, but probably participated therein, and delayed giving information of the wreck.

3. That the whole circumstances lead to the conviction that some of the crew of the vessel reached the shore alive, and were murdered.

4. That the Brazilian Government and authorities did not use the powers they possessed to ascertain the extent of crime committed, to punish the criminals, or to recover the stolen property.

The Brazilians, on the other hand, maintained:

1. That the cargo was plundered, though not to a large extent.

2. That the local authorities efficiently performed their duties, and gave the earliest information of the wreck.

3. That none of the crew were assassinated.

4. That the Brazilian Government and authorities took the most rapid and energetic steps to ascertain whether assassination had taken place, and to punish those who might have committed such a crime, as well as those who pillaged the cargo.

Let us test these contradictory statements by the evidence; and first, as to the extent and character of the plunder.

The Consul, Mr. Vereker, writing immediately after visiting the coast, says: "Many of the crates and some of the barrels had been manifestly broken by the force of the waves, *many more* were violently broken open and rifled of their contents; many barrels which had contained beer were in this category, and *every case and box* had been burst open and robbed of all its contents; a number had contained manufactured goods in tins, *in most cases* the tins had been cut open and the contents taken away, but in others the tins

had been bodily carried off. I would call special attention to the seamen's trunks, *all of which had been violently burst open* and not a single article left inside."

By the violence here mentioned human agency, as distinguished from the force of the waves, is manifestly intended. In a further despatch it is said, "there do not appear watches, money, or even a coat, or shirt, belonging to the captain or passengers." In a private letter to Mr. Christie, Mr. Vereker mentions the circumstance of having found in the house where he stopped, 2 cases belonging to the "Prince of Wales," empty, but dry and in perfect order, which being compared with a statement of cargo forwarded by the ship-owners, appeared to have contained fine manufactured goods, no part of which were delivered up. It is also remarkable that the Brazilian authorities have not denied the plunder of the cargo, and only endeavoured to make it appear small in amount after a claim for compensation had been advanced. The Delegate of Police of Rio Grande, writing on the 19th June, 1861, directs "that an account may be taken of the goods of said barque, which with so much scandal were robbed by some residents of that district, pointing out at the same time who were the authors of so heinous a crime," and he expresses a hope that those degenerate Brazilians might be punished, *so as not to stain the good name of the country in the eyes of the stranger*. It will be noted that this letter was written the day before the Consul in his despatch of the 20th June complained of the plunder of the cargo, and it may be concluded that the fact of the plunder and its character were then matter of notoriety at Rio Grande. The President of the province of Rio Grande do Sul, on the 27th June, 1861, informs the Consul "that precautions have been taken to proceed with all the rigour of the laws against the individuals who robbed the objects cast upon the shore." The Municipal Judge of Rio Grande, who had accompanied the British Consul to the coast after the wreck, writes several months afterwards to the President stating "The cargo of the barque was *all* sacked." "It is known that many of the inhabitants, perhaps the wealthiest of the place,

are devoted to this industry (wrecking), but against these no proofs appear, there will be no witnesses who would depose against them." Again, the Chief of Police, writing to this judge, quotes it as his opinion that the wealthy inhabitants of the locality of the wreck were the principal criminals. In the memorandum presented by the Marquis d'Abrantes, no denial of the extent of the depredations is contained, and throughout the Parliamentary papers many proofs are shown of the earnest combination of the inhabitants of the coast to check inquiry, and not to give up the property plundered. From all these circumstances we are justified in concluding that the plunder of the cargo of the "Prince of Wales" was wholesale and effected with some degree of publicity.

We have next to inquire whether the local authorities used proper energy to report the wreck, to prevent plunder, and to recover the goods stolen; or, on the other hand, whether they acted in collusion with the plunderers. For this purpose it is necessary to fix the date of the wreck as nearly as we can. The Consul guesses that the wreck may have taken place on the 7th or 8th June, 1861; and this supposition is generally maintained by both parties, but the Consul adds, "probably in the same gale in which the 'Hound,' of Greenock, and other vessels were lost;" and in the local papers we find that the "Hound," the "Graça," and another Brazilian vessel were lost on this coast between the *sixth and seventh* June, in a strong gale from S.S.E., the two first to the northwards and the last to the southwards of the point where the "Prince of Wales" was found, and that the gale was at the highest on the afternoon of the 6th and abated on the 8th. It seems, therefore, we may most safely assume the wreck of the "Prince of Wales" to have taken place on the 7th June, but official intelligence thereof only reached Rio Grande on the 14th June. It is unnecessary to accompany the Marquis d'Abrantes in nice disquisitions as to the distances to be overcome and the formalities to be gone through. The simple fact appears to be, that from the period of the stranding of the vessel to

information of the casualty reaching Rio Grande at 70 miles distance, seven days elapsed, and yet a messenger at ordinary rate of speed could traverse the distance over those easy plains in a day. It is true that the British Consul and authorities occupied two days in going to the wreck, but then they went a circuitous road to stop at a friend's house, and the party was large, including some who were unaccustomed to riding. We also find that the fact of the wreck was known in the country on the 9th June; that the inspector of the district states, he only proceeded thereto on the 11th, and that the Sub-Delegade of Police, whose duty it was to superintend the proceedings, did not go to the coast at all.

These uncontested facts point either to a system essentially faulty and requiring to be rectified, or to great negligence or corruption on the part of the local authorities, and we should have preferred to see the Brazilian Government regret such palpable omissions, rather than strive to justify them as normal or almost necessary occurrences. What, for instance, would a foreign shipmaster think, when navigating by the coast of Albardão, were he told that if his vessel should casually become stranded within 70 miles of the important port of Rio Grande, where the Consuls reside, seven days would probably elapse before news of the event reached that port, and a longer time before he could expect succour.

With regard to the efficiency of the local authorities in checking the plunder, we cannot find, after careful perusal of the Parliamentary papers, any proof whatever that such was done, though we find constant assertions of their zeal and energy. In the memorandum before mentioned, we find the Brazilian Foreign Minister boasting that before the police authority was informed of the wreck, two or three days had elapsed, during which the depredators had plenty of time for the perpetration of crime; but he does not seem to have considered that this argument, even were its correctness acknowledged, would not show the efficiency which is asserted, but on the contrary, would point to a degree of

neglect of which foreign nations might well complain. That in a locality specially subject to wrecks, at a time immediately after a violent gale on the coast, when a wreck might well be expected, and at a point two hours' ride from the house of the Coast Inspector, whose principal duty it is to look after wrecks and protect the persons and property connected therewith, the wreck of a large vessel should take place, the cargo being spread over the shore, and that plunderers (described as "ill-disposed men, in the greatest part wanderers," who "commonly flock to the shores of the sea whenever they nourish hopes of plunder,") should be allowed for three days to do as they thought fit in regard to the wrecked persons and property, without the knowledge, not to speak of the interference, of any authority, even of a police soldier, gives a picture of the administration of authority on the coast of Albardão so deplorable, that though vouched by the Brazilian Minister, we find it difficult to realize the position, especially as the inhabitants of the coast are mostly national guards, who have power to act as police; and it is difficult to perceive how a crowd of plunderers could be engaged for days in wrecking close to the houses of these residents without their knowledge. The supposition that local authorities had participated in the plunder, may have arisen rather as a deduction from the known facts than as a circumstance proved; and though in the Parliamentary papers it is shown that in the Justice's house there were found cases which had contained valuable goods, the latter having been abstracted, and also books which had been taken out of trunks, the remaining contents of which were not forthcoming, and that the District Inspector had for some time the control of the coast, where "every case and box had been burst open and robbed of its contents;" and it is especially mentioned regarding the night of the 15th June, that he had stopped on the shore all night, when "all the cargo was found plundered and the cases broken open, some apparently quite recently, probably the previous night, as the smell of the wood and turpentine were quite fresh," and though Mr. Vereker said there was

no real doubt that the cases were broken by the Inspector's order, but he could not legally prove it so; an opinion which tallies very closely with the preceding observation, and of which we have a further illustration in the account sales of the goods delivered to the Rio Grande Custom-house by the same Inspector, which include "16 tins with thread," the tins having been presented without any covering case. Such tins are usually shipped in wooden cases, and were so shipped on the "Prince of Wales," four in each case, consequently four cases, at least, must have been broken open to obtain those tins. Yet these circumstances, and others in the papers, rather lead to a strong presumption of guilt, without containing proof that any portion of those goods were actually appropriated by the local authorities. We are therefore inclined with regard to this implied charge to give the verdict, "Not proven."

The next point in these questions which we shall consider, as it is in the eyes of Englishmen the most important, is also in consequence of the absence of evidence the most difficult on which to form a definite opinion, we allude, of course, to the question as to whether the deaths of all or any of the crew of the "Prince of Wales" were the result of natural causes or of murder. Let us examine the statements made, such as they are. The British Consul at Rio Grande, in his first despatch of the 25th June, 1861, to the Board of Trade, reporting what he had seen on the coast, calls attention to the seamen's trunks, "all of which had been violently burst open, and not a single article left inside, and yet they appeared quite dry within, the paper linings of some not having been even soiled, *leading to the suspicion that they had come safely in the boats.*" As an illustration of the state in which some articles came on shore, the recovery of "a beautiful edition of the Bible, with Edie's Commentaries, and a smaller Bible, both perfect, and showing no stains or signs of having been damp," is mentioned, these books having been taken out of the trunks or seamen's chests. The edition of the Bible here alluded to is well known; we believe it is the Edinburgh edition, the whole

being in one large volume, printed on clear paper, with gilt edges, and at beginning and end interleaves of a sensitive brown, the latter affected by sea water, turns yellow, and such a book, if exposed to the action of salt water, would have manifested indications of such having occurred; but it is distinctly stated *it showed no signs of having been damp*, and indeed this is not surprising, when it is confessed that the book was taken out of one of those trunks, *the paper linings of some of which had not been even soiled*. Further on in the report which the British Consul made to the local police, it is stated that the long boat and the greater part of the cargo and appurtenances of the barque were found in nearly the same spot; *also the seamen's and captain's chests*, the gig and the oars of the long boat and gig were also found there; also light objects, such as *large pieces of cork, feather pillow-cases, &c.* The bodies are stated to have been discovered two or three leagues from the wreck *beyond the point where parts of the cargo were washed ashore*, and even as far as the River Baeta (twelve miles from the locality of the wreck), and an inquiry is urgently requested to ascertain how they got there. In the subsequent report to the Board of Trade it is intimated that the greater part of the jettison was crowded within a short distance W.N.W. from where the hull was discovered anchored, including "*long boat, gig, oars, seamen's chests, supply of provisions, parts of rigging, &c.*" "The long boat was broken *at the prow*, apparently from striking on the sands." These statements are extracted from public documents, widely distributed and closely examined at the very commencement of this question, and we do not find that they have been controverted in any particular; we may therefore take them to be a true description of the appearances presented, when the British Consul, the Municipal Judge, and a number of other Brazilians visited the coast, and they lead to the following conclusions:—

1st. That the barque having stranded in a violent gale from the S.S.E., was secured by anchors.

2nd. That the long-boat was found W.N.W. from the wreck, much in the position in which it would have been driven

by the storm if the crew had determined to abandon their vessel, and from its having come with force *proW on* to the shore, it would appear to have been steered, as otherwise probably it would have come broadside on or been capsized, and from the manner in which it was burst or split open at the prow, it may be concluded that there was cargo therein, which pressing on the sides in conjunction with the thumping on the sands, was calculated to cause the damage found.

3rd. That immediately adjoining the long-boat were found the seamen's chests, provisions, and oars, some of the chests, which there is no reason to think were hermetically sealed, showing no signs of having been submerged: these are just the articles which, in the event of having to abandon the wreck, the men would have tried to reach the shore with, and it is impossible to account for the circumstances, unless some of the crew had been in charge.

4th. That the gig and its oars were in a perfect state and near the long-boat, though so differing in weight.

These conclusions, though they leave a strong impression on the mind that some of those in the barque had reached the shore alive in those boats, yet do not prove any foul play. Let us continue to examine the evidence as far as it is given.

Ten bodies of persons who had been in the "Prince of Wales" were found, there is no question as to this fact; all were stated to have been buried, five in one place; among the latter the bodies of the captain and his wife. The British Consul wished to see where his countrymen had been buried, this was opposed; he then applied for an inquest, this was resisted; finally he demanded that the bodies should be brought for burial to the cemetery of Rio Grande, and four only out of the ten bodies were produced, and of these four *three were found unburied*, the fourth having been buried *on the shore*. With regard to the latter, it is said, "The man had apparently been drowned," and he is shown to have been fully dressed in seamen's clothes. The other three bodies recovered are stated to have been found "a considerable distance from the shore," "at least 900 feet distance,"

and "near the River Baeta," twelve miles from the wreck. One of these was "partly dressed in coarse trowsers, shirt, and stockings." The others were mere skeletons.

The jolly-boat of the barque appears to have been driven ashore at a point perhaps six miles from the wreck. To the northwards of this point it was stated the bodies of the captain, his wife, and three others, were placed in one grave; however none of these were produced nor the locality of the grave designated, the reason alleged being that it was impossible to discover the place in consequence of the mutability of the soil. In our object of arriving at a just conclusion it is most important that we should investigate whether this allegation is true, or whether these bodies were wilfully kept back from view. We find that *on the 17th June, 1861*, it was openly declared that those five bodies had been placed in the one grave by the orders of the District Inspector. It is on the *22nd June, 1861*, that the Sub-Delegate of Police reports that from the mutability of the soil no traces of the grave can be found, the interval is five days, and on reference to the local papers we find that during those days there were occasional showers, but no very strong winds; we also note that the grave of a seaman, buried *on the shore*, which manifestly would be more subject to mutation than any other locality, was found without difficulty. Are we then to credit that when it was determined to bury five of these unfortunate people in one grave, the place selected would have been in moveable sands, which, if capable, as is suggested, in five days of covering up all designations of the locality, might, just as probably, have been carried away, and left the bodies exposed, thus rendering the labour nugatory. To bury those five, several persons must have been employed,—did they all forget where they had placed them? We cannot credit such unlikely stories. All parties are agreed that these five persons were together, and the fact that of the four others recovered three were unburied, implies that the other five must have been very near each other, as it would have required a degree of tenderness we do not detect for the inhabitants

to have brought the wrecked bodies from any distance, so that they might repose in one grave.

The Brazilian Government maintained that "it was sufficient to reflect on the force of the current and the wind, on the difference of weight of a human body, a case of merchandize, and a log of timber, to comprehend that it was impossible that all could have come to the same place." Granted, but surely such a general argument does not account for the position of bodies assumed to have come from the wreck, some found inland, all a considerable distance from the wreck, ten to twelve miles, many miles from the slightest remnants of the wreck or cargo, five being *all together at this great distance*, and we are expected to believe that all this was effected by the winds and currents, notwithstanding the circumstance that the large pieces of cork, feather pillows, boats, oars, chests, cabin furniture, &c., were so many miles away.

Surely the English must be thought very credulous when such arguments as the above, and the previous one, of sudden disappearance of graves through mutations of the surface, are seriously put forward as conclusive proof that none of these wrecked persons were foully dealt with. On the contrary, the circumstances of the case, as far as they have been disclosed, the strong feelings and combinations manifested in the locality, the prevarications of the authorities, the flights of inhabitants (not to be expected merely for plunder, that being recognized as "an industry" generally practised), the strong temptation, the value of the cargo not being known, the denials of assassination even before investigation had been made, the unwillingness to show where were the bodies of the dead, and the curious facts that transpired regarding the places where they were found, and the pretended burials,—all these lead us to the irresistible conviction that some of the crew of the "Prince of Wales" were murdered. And though the facts discovered may be accounted for by various suppositions, such for instance as the suggestion that the Captain and others may have been driven ashore, or lost in the jolly-boat found so

far from the wreck, and that those in the long-boat or gig, who were saved, may have followed to the northwards, yet under no circumstances do we find that the acknowledged facts can be accounted for as being the effects of winds and waves alone; these may have taken some lives, but human agency had its share in the sad tragedy.

The Brazilian authorities have been accused of showing culpable negligence if not connivance with criminals throughout the transactions arising from the wreck. In order to form an opinion on this question, we propose only to consider the position taken by the superior Brazilian authorities; and, putting aside the allegations of the English officials, because not only may they have expected too much, but allegations are not proofs, to endeavour to find from the papers presented by the Brazilians themselves, not whether they exercised that great vigilance and energy of which they boast, but whether they publicly consigned to the case that degree of attention, and adopted those measures which the British nation could, under the circumstances, expect as a right.

The first Brazilian despatch published is that of 19th June, 1861, from the police of Rio Grande to the inferior officer on the coast, ordering that the plunderers of the cargo should "be arrested, that they may be processed and punished," &c. On looking through the papers, we do not find that any arrest, process, or punishment, followed on these orders, nor any reason assigned for the omission. Next comes a despatch from the same police authority, in which he partly contradicts his previous letter, intimating that the police are "not competent to proceed against any persons who were the authors or accomplices of so heinous a crime," and referring the British Consul to the Municipal and Commercial Judges. We understand that it is not usual in Brazil for the Municipal or Commercial Judges to answer despatches from Consular Agents, but only legal petitions; the course recommended by the Police does not seem, therefore, intended to advance the ends of justice. We even find that it was *by the police* the subsequent proceedings were

carried on. On the 27th June, 1861, the President of Rio Grande declares to the English Consul "that precautions have been taken to proceed with all the rigour of the laws against the individuals who robbed the objects *cast upon* the shore, *as well as that it may be known whether the persons who formed the crew of that vessel* ("Prince of Wales") *were or not assassinated.*" On the 11th July, 1861, the President further declares, "On this occasion I reiterate my orders to the Chief of Police to proceed with all energy to search into this fact." Between these two despatches a precious fortnight elapsed, but it is not alleged that any steps were taken within that period, and the next Brazilian despatch produced is dated 18th September, 1861, *three months and ten days after the wreck*, and *three months* after the pressing demands for inquiry; we are, therefore, justified in supposing, that no reports, as a consequence of the stringent orders of the President, were made, or if made, that they were of a character to be suppressed. The despatch referred to of the 18th September, 1861, is from Senhor Garcer, then Delegate of Police, and who is the same person who three months previously had gone with the English Consul to the wreck, he being at that time Municipal Judge; he was, therefore, better able to form a correct estimate of the facts than those Brazilian authorities who had not visited the scene of the wreck, and his statements consequently are worthy of attention. He asserts, "that the cargo of the barque was *all sacked*;" "that the witnesses called to give evidence *all refused*, pretending that they were sick;" "some have absented themselves to the Oriental State;" "others have permanently fled;" "that many of the inhabitants, *perhaps the wealthiest of the place*, are devoted to this *industry*, but against these no proofs appear,—there will be no witnesses who would depose against them;" finally, he intimates that the whole case has resolved itself into a prosecution of "the *unfortunate Indian* Mariano (perhaps the least guilty of all)." On view of the facts stated, it certainly appears extraordinary that no prosecution should even be attempted against a Brazilian native, and that an unfortunate Indian should

alone be made the scapegoat; the absence also of all reference in these letters to the fate of the crew implies at least that no investigation was made regarding that part of the question. This prosecution of the Indian, in which were centred the efforts of the Brazilians, until the 18th September, 1861, is also remarkable in another respect. We have ascertained that the Indian here spoken of was one of those who when visited after the wreck by the British Consul and District Inspector "pretended that he had never heard of the wreck, or of bodies being found." In another place, Consul Vereker says, "*nothing was found in the houses*" (including the Indian Mariano's), but the prosecution was for having goods from the cargo "*spread out in his house*," and it was explained that those were the goods claimed by the Consul in the house of the neighbouring Justice of the Peace, *on the day previous* to the visit to Mariano, who, it is stated, "it was evident was acting with Faustino" (the Inspector). What, then, are we to think of this prosecution?

From these considerations we discover that three months after they had knowledge of the wreck of the British ship, the possible murder of fourteen British subjects, and the plunder of British property of value unknown, the whole of the energetic promises of the Brazilians had resulted in their having made no inquiry regarding the deaths of those on board; in their having recovered no part of the stolen property, unless the alleged seizure from the Indian, and in their having taken no efficient steps to prosecute or punish any one excepting this same "unfortunate Indian." Surely, in view of the excellent language of the President and Government, the "*mons parturiens*" has only brought forth a "*ridiculus mus*," not certainly sufficiently big to satisfy, under the circumstances, any Government of a civilized nation, much less that of Great Britain, accustomed as she is to expect truth and justice even from foreigners; and it is remarkable that up to the period mentioned full confidence in the integrity and efficiency of the Brazilian authorities seems to have been accorded them, as the British officials left the case wholly in their hands.

We pass by the communications subsequent to the date 18th September last mentioned, for though containing the usual fine flow of *words* and *orders*, they do not appear to have led to any *acts*, and on the 19th December, 1861, *nearly six months and a half after the wreck*, we find the municipal Judge and Delegate of Police reproducing the old story that all the criminals were summed up in the Indian, Mariano Pinto, and stating that the process had barely then come to an end; however, the sentence of Mariano is dated afterwards, and by another Judge.

All the steps, until April, 1862, appear to have been taken in accord between the British and Brazilian authorities, the former trusting to the latter; the insignificant result we have shown; but we now enter on a new phase of the question due to the energy of Her Majesty's Government. A gun-boat and a naval officer were sent to Rio Grande, *ten months after the wreck*, to co-operate with the British Consul; the latter applied for a *bond fide* investigation under the chief authority of police; this was promised, but never accomplished; and the gun-boat, after a long delay, returned to its station with mission unperformed. On the 6th September, 1862, the Marquis d'Abrantes, Brazilian Foreign Minister, insists on the presence of that gun-boat as an act of intimidation, and as a reason, through "national pride," of nothing being done; but nothing was done before when all was left in their own hands. And when we examine the result of this visit, we find that it was *subsequent thereto* that the first acknowledged inquiry with regard to the deaths of the crew was set on foot; the gun-boat was at Porto Alegre (the provincial capital) on 6th and 7th April, 1862, the inquiry has commenced on the 24th of the same month, *ten months and a half after the deaths*; even with the best intentions it would, after so long an interval, have been almost impossible to obtain proofs of the crime; but when the motives of the inquiry, as reported by Consul Vereker, "not for the discovery of truth, but rather to satisfy the British and Brazilian Governments," are taken into consideration, it is manifest that no proof of the more serious crime was to

be expected, nor can it be supposed that such proofs would have been desired, as they would have formed the strongest condemnation against the Brazilian Government, who, from the first, had stoutly denied the possibility of murder on their shores, and had allowed to pass the period when an effective investigation might have been instituted. It appears, however, from a despatch of the President of Rio Grande, dated 31st *July*, 1862, that this tardy examination was not wholly barren of results, for he says that eight more criminals had been then discovered, making eleven that were known; we are not told what has been done to any of these persons, but the fact that such a discovery was made nearly *fourteen months* after the wreck, leads to the conviction that if some energy had been displayed in the first instance, if, in fact, the Brazilians had acted up to the words they then used, the results would have been greater and more creditable to Brazil, and the veil would have been torn from the horrid tragedy we have been obliged to contemplate.

It is unnecessary further to analyze the tedious despatches which close the correspondence respecting the wreck of the barque "Prince of Wales;" from the facts already stated it may be deduced that the local authorities, in the first instance showed great negligence, even if they did not connive with the criminals; that the superior authorities did not take effective steps for the restoration of the plundered property, and the discovery of the crimes committed; that they were especially in error for having avoided investigations regarding the deaths of those on board, until such time as the investigations became practically valueless; that the only appreciable results obtained were subsequent to pressure being applied, and more than a year after the occurrence of the wreck.

Under those circumstances the British Government could not remain quiescent; it was its duty to protect the lives and properties of British subjects wheresoever assailed. In the case under consideration there was the certainty that a large amount of property had been wrongfully appropriated, the certainty that the bodies of British subjects

had been stripped and left unburied, and the very strong presumption, amounting almost to certainty, that some had been murdered. Englishmen would not have been content to receive, as sole satisfaction for these offences, complimentary phrases and diplomatic finesse. The course adopted by the British Government appears to have been moderate; they first asked for a searching inquiry, and the punishment of the criminals, this was promised but not performed; then they asked for some compensation for those whose property was plundered, this was refused; then they offered to give weight to the inquiry by sending a naval officer and vessel of war to the locality, this was objected to; finally, after all friendly efforts had failed they had recourse to reprisals, in itself a measure of no great severity, as it does not amount to war, and conducted in this case in a way to be the least offensive to the Brazilians, and the result was the payment of a moderate amount of compensation to the owner of the "Prince of Wales." We know that it has been urged that the detention, of the vessels seized, in a bay near Rio de Janeiro, was an invasion of Brazilian territory; but would not the situation have been greatly aggravated if they had been sent to St. Helena or the Falkland Islands. Again, it was urged the amount of compensation was somewhat arbitrarily fixed, this results from the nature of such items, as it is rarely possible to determine exactly the value to be received, but the amount is small, and the question is one not so much of pounds, shillings, and pence, as of principle.

The excitement which was sought to be raised in Brazil in consequence of these events was so disproportionate to the cause that we are inclined to agree with those Brazilian writers, who attributed it to a fear that this was only the first of many questions which were to be raised, it being notorious that there are many unresolved questions pending between the two Governments; yet surely we may rely that all such questions will be fairly discussed on their own merits, irrespective of all other considerations; and in the special case with which we are occupied, it really would seem as though England had more cause for thinking itself

offended than Brazil. England took a prominent place among nations to establish and recognize the Empire of Brazil, and for this purpose she used her great influence with her old ally, Portugal. When the independence of Brazil was established, England proved herself a firm and faithful friend, and if we except some severe steps which (affecting a less advanced nation) had become necessary in order to put a stop to the public horrors exhibited by the Slave Trade, both nations worked in harmony for many years; the Brazilians promising, the English hoping. Commerce between the two nations goes on increasing by gigantic strides, intercourse goes on augmenting, the benefit in each case is mutual. The result is, that we find Brazil at the present ranking high among our customers, and the import and export trade in Brazil with England about equivalent to that with all other nations. It is, besides, notorious, that almost all the capital supplied for ameliorations in Brazil is English money; therefore, when a British vessel was unavoidably driven on the coast of Brazil, the English nation had the right to expect that the crew would have been hospitably received; when the cargo was plundered and the crew killed, they had the right to expect that full inquiries would be made and the powers of the law put in force for the protection of their fellow-subjects; when the bodies were found they had the right to expect that they would be treated with decency, and at least buried, and that some efforts would have been made to recover the stolen property. They were disappointed in every respect; and when their Government claimed a trifling reparation, as a proof of the disgust and disapprobation with which such proceedings were viewed, they were met with a storm of opposition; and in this opposition the strongest proof of the friendly feelings of the English towards the Brazilians were manifested, for we find the most trifling allegations in favour of the Brazilians greatly magnified, and statesmen of England standing up in their places in Parliament to attack the officers of their own country, and give to Brazil the benefit of the smallest imagined doubt.

Before closing this review, and for its completeness, we will say a few words with regard to two gentlemen who have been prominently mentioned in the public commentaries on the question. Of course we allude to Mr. Christie, the British Minister at Rio de Janeiro, and to Mr. Vereker, the British Consul at Rio Grande. They have both been violently attacked by the Brazilian press and even in the British Parliament. It is true that, unless in a weak cause, advocates will not wander from the essential matter to indulge in personalities, but as it has been done in this case, let us see its value. Mr. Christie has been most severely handled, but very little said against him has anything to do with the case we are considering, and to which we are limited. Reading the Blue Books we find that Mr. Christie avoided taking any step, *ex proprio motu*, awaiting always the instruction of the Government; and in carrying out those instructions he appears to have manifested a desire not unnecessarily to hurt the feelings of the Brazilian nation. The charge against Mr. Vereker was, that in September, 1862, when he was at Rio de Janeiro (nearly fifteen months after the wreck), he was suffering from illness, and had mistaken notions about his life being threatened. It was sought, on these grounds, to weaken the force of Mr. Vereker's reports regarding the wreck. But even if the story of the illness were true, it could scarcely affect reports made fifteen months previously, and there are strong reasons why we should rely on those reports. We cannot, for instance, imagine that a Consul in a foreign port would point out criminal acts, would insist on the punishment of malefactors, would detail scenes visited by many others, and would put forward all those statements in an open and public manner, unless a strong conviction that he was telling the truth and performing a duty supported him; for it is evident that by so independent a course he would create enemies, possibly render his residence abroad unbearable. And in this particular case we find that the truth of the facts detailed by Mr. Vereker is not denied by the Brazilian authorities; but, on the contrary, in so far as we have their views, seems to be supported.

We, have, however, taken special pains to inquire with regard to this alleged illness, and are satisfied that it was a mere myth invented by Mr. Vereker's opponents for a purpose in connexion with this case, and too easily credited by Mr. Christie. We need not here inquire whether Mr. Vereker's life was in danger or not, the papers give us no sufficient information on this point, but it is notorious that when he was at Rio de Janeiro there was much public excitement, and that he was subjected to annoyance. His numerous reports on Brazilian affairs appear clear and impartial, and we do not find any part of his public proceedings suggesting undue fear of danger. We are told that he has on several occasions gone to the notorious coast of Albardao either alone or accompanied by none but Brazilians; that he has been there even since these questions with England arose, that he has gone to sea in all weathers for the relief of British ships and the saving of lives and property, and that it was his custom to proceed, usually alone, to all parts of his district, wherever his services were required. We also know that he has travelled through the interior of Brazil and other foreign countries, and has resided for eleven years at the remote port of Rio Grande. These are not the acts of a man, who without sufficient cause would imagine his life in danger. We repeat our conviction that the attempts made to weaken the force of Mr. Vereker's reports fail completely.

We shall now close these observations, hoping that by placing the questions which arose between England and Brazil in a clear point of view, the public of both countries may be better enabled than heretofore to form an impartial judgment thereon, and that our remarks may tend to heal the soreness which is felt at both sides, and to draw more nearly the bonds of amity which should unite England and Brazil for their mutual benefit.

LONDON,
October, 1863.

